

# Senior Living Blog

## 26 JAN | 7 Steps to Downsizing for a Move to Senior Living

ALISSA SAUER HOW TO MAKE THE MOVE



7 Simple Steps to Downsize for a Move to Senior Living

As exciting as a move to senior living can be, the start of the journey can be daunting. Beginning the moving process often means sorting through decades worth of items to decide which ones will stay and which ones will have to go. From starting the conversation about downsizing to your packing day, there is a lot to consider. These tips can help you get started on the process, walk you through how to approach downsizing, and give you simple, practical steps to get it done.

### WHAT IS DOWNSIZING?

A move into senior living brings great freedom and independence for seniors who have lived in their family home for many years. It is exciting to look forward to move-in day and think of a more carefree lifestyle without all the hindrances of home ownership. A move into senior living also means downsizing and letting go of lifelong possessions, which can be difficult for many seniors. It can be an overwhelming thought for seniors who have spent decades in their current home.

Downsizing can be overwhelming physically, emotionally, and mentally. Going through closets, basements, and unopened boxes or bins can be physically draining on families. It can also dredge up painful memories your loved one doesn't want to remember or even happy memories that your loved one doesn't want to let go.

### DISCUSSING DOWNSIZING WITH YOUR LOVED ONE

As daunting as the task may seem, it is very important. And it's important that it's done right with your loved one playing an active role in the process so that he or she doesn't feel pressured to part with special mementos too quickly.

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When working with your loved one to start downsizing, remember these important tips to ensure they feel heard, listened to, and respected:

- Be aware of how difficult this may be for your parent(s). Show compassion and understanding when they need to slow down or want a break.
- Respect their possessions and reasons for holding onto items for so long.
- Stay positive. Sharing your own emotions about letting go of their home or possessions can make it harder on your loved one.
- Offer to take any personal items they can't seem to part with, like photo albums or scrapbooks
- Have brochures of their new community accessible, serving as a visual reminder of the future and reminding them of the exciting new chapter waiting for them on the other side of the move.

### 7 STEPS TO DOWNSIZING

When it comes to downsizing and make the hard decisions about beloved household items, start small and work your way through the house slowly. Working through these 8 steps will help you make a plan to effectively and efficiently make the move into senior living.

#### 1. BUY A MOVING NOTEBOOK

Here is where you can track important phone numbers, notes about miscellaneous items, donation ideas, etc. This will help you keep everything organized in one spot and writing lists can help you de-stress and tackle the task at hand.

#### 2. CONSIDER HIRING A MOVE MANAGER

If finances allow, a senior move manager can help you and your loved one sort through the home and provide an unbiased third party opinion on items. Professional senior move managers are well-equipped to ease stressful family situations and are skilled in the sorting and packing that comes with a move to senior living.

#### 3. REQUEST FLOOR PLANS

Request floor plans with measurements from the community you loved one will be moving to. Keep this accessible as you begin downsizing so that you are aware of how much space you have and how much furniture and household items will take up in the new space.

#### 4. ONE ROOM AT A TIME

Start with one room at a time, and starting with the easiest room will give you a small taste of success and encourage you to keep going. Sorting does not mean packing. It means deciding the fate of each item. Note which items will be sold, donated, trashed, or brought into senior living.

#### 5. PURGE USELESS PAPERWORK

Don't attempt to sort through years of receipts, checks, or paperwork. Stack important papers in a separate pile and go through it later when you will be able to shred documents that must be shredded. Keep the momentum and don't be hindered by tedious sorting now.

#### 6. DONATE

For items being donated, decide where to take your donation. Goodwill, Habitat ReStore, The Salvation Army, or a local charity will often take household items. Ask if they would be willing to come pick up your donation at your loved one's home. You could also consider having an estate sale to help clear out the home of unwanted items.

#### 7. START PACKING!

Ask friends and family to come help. Once everything has been sorted and marked, it will be easy for friends to come in and put items in boxes. Label each box with a room and brief item description (i.e. kitchen/dishes) so that movers will know which room to put the box in the new place. Keep important items such as keys, cell phone, relevant contracts, first aid kit, and your notebook separate and accessible so they don't get packed away.

We know that there are a lot of small details involved when moving to a senior living community and we are committed to helping you every step of the way. We invite you to let go of what you know and step into a great adventure in one of our premier senior communities. Start your journey by [visiting one of our communities](#) today.

*Live Big. Live Bold.*

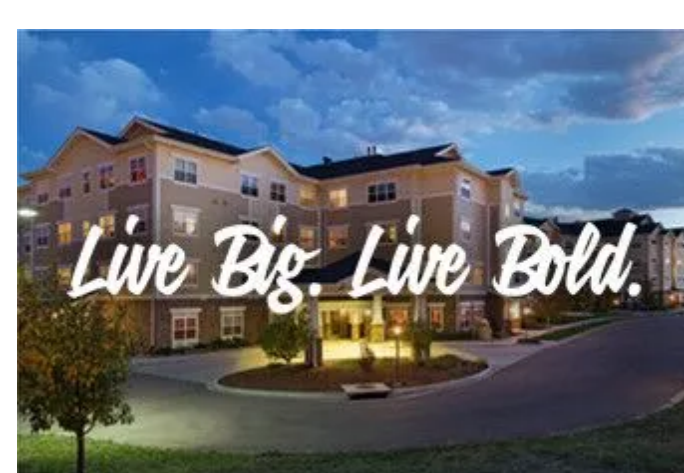
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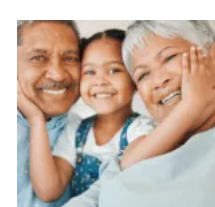
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About the author

#### ALISSA SAUER

Alissa has been working in marketing and the senior living industry for over 8 years. With a B.S. in advertising from the University of Illinois, Alissa has worked all over the world as a freelance communications strategist and writer. Published in Forbes, Senior Finance Advisor, Alzheimers.net and on other leading senior care blogs, she leverages her working knowledge of the senior care industry with leading research and best practices to create engaging content benefitting seniors and their caregivers. In her free time, Alissa loves to travel, read, cook, and spend time with her family.

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